

THE  
CHRISTIAN PRINCIPLE  
AND  
Peaceable CONVERSATION

Of the People ( of God ) called

QUAKERS,

With Respect to the

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AND

*Friends Soc. of*  
GOVERNMENT

Once more Asserted.

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Published by Reason of some late Reflections  
cast upon them, Especially by the OBSERVATOR  
Dated the 22d July 1685.

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With a brief Testimony against all Plots, Conspiracies,  
and Rebellion.

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As being Inconsistent with true Christianity.

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Printed in the Year, 1685.

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**E**VER Since the great God of Heaven and Earth hath made us sensible of the knowledge of his Truth in the inward Parts, and the powerful operation of it to Regenerate and Renew our Minds, change and purifie our Hearts, and illuminate our Understandings : we have been careful to keep our Consciences void of offence towards God, and towards Men, and to follow peace and ensue it; delighting to do good to all, but to hurt none. This we have in our Lives and Conversations manifested amongst our Neighbours and Country Men, having been enabled thereto by the Grace and Spirit of God; which taught the true Christians in the primitive times, to deny Ungodliness and Worldly Lusts, and to live Soberly, Righteously, and Godly in this present World. And hath taught us the same lessons in this Age.

We have been very evilly treated, and variously proved and tryed since we have been a People, both in *England, Scotland, and Ireland*, and in many other places beyond the Seas within this thirty odd years; under various Governours and Governments. And we have undergone many and grievous sufferings through the assistants of God, with much Meekness and Patience without Resistance; yea, without a thought or desire to avenge our selves, or to lift up a Hand against those that hath Plowed long Furrowes upon our Backs. But instead thereof have desired the welfare of our Enemies and Persecutors, according to the precepts and example of Christ Jesus.

We have from time to time publickly asserted and declared, not only by our words but by our lives and practices that our principles are for the promoting Love, Peace, and good will amongst all Men; being indeed the natural fruit and effect of true Christianity, or the Christian Religion.

Notwithstanding which we still suffer under the Notion and denomination of evil doers, though hitherto through the grace of God we have kept our integrity and walked in innocency and in inoffenciveness towards all Men; and a little Christian kindness and Charity in the Observator, would have restrained his

Pen from Rendering us to Magistracy, and the whole Nation as a party in Conspiracy and Rebellion. We have given him no occasion to account us of the Number of his Trimmers, *viz.* Sometimes of one side, Sometimes of another; or any thing to save from suffering: we go right on our way in fair weather and fowl, through Briars and Thorns; though we are often strip of our fleece, and cloath'd with stone Dublets, we mean Prisons.

We have no shelter but our Innocency, which he seems desirous to disrobe us off that we might be devoured with Speed, if God did not encline the hearts of his Superiors to believe better of us; and to do us more Justice. We as a People should be concluded guilty when any particular Person that may be reputed of us, doth any thing that is evil, this is not *to do as he would be done by.*

We do affirm in the sight and presence of God, that we Conspire with no Man, with no Sect, nor sort of People against the King his Peace and Government; neither have we ever contributed as he injuriously saith, we have to the raising any Storm in the Nation, Privately, or Publickly; therefore the Observator hath wronged and abuse Us.

Having no just ground for his Unkind Inferences against us, we are and have alwayes been for things that make for Peace in the family in the City; in the Province, Country, or Kingdom where we dwell. We are redeemed out of the Spirit of Strife, Violence, Wars, and Contentions, Plots, and Conspiracies, and so are Dead to those things; we do believe and declare that those things are inconsistent with the Christian Religion, the powerful effect thereof known in the hearts of Men, doth really lead them to love their Enemies, and to pray for them that despitefully use them, &c. then who can such hate and conspire against?

But further the Observator for a Colourable proof of his Inferences against the Quakers, Speaking of the late D. of M. Declaration, saith, *A Quaker Printer was the Man chosen to dispatch it at the Press,* to which we say, that we are innocent in the matter we know nothing thereof; neither of the Quaker chosen, nor the chusers of him: nor of the Declaration it self but by Report. We have no hand in spreading and promoting such things which tends to stir up Wars, Insurrections, and Violence, to the destroying mens lives; these things are against our

peaceable principle of love and good will which we have to all Men. And we do solemnly declare, that if any that hath walked amongst us, do have, or shall do such things, they are in our esteem false Brethren, deceitful in their Profession, unfaithful to God and Man; Hypocrites, and Deceitful Workers, and were either never truly of us, or are fallen degenerated and Apostatized from the love and fear of God and good will to Men, which is the true ground of our Religion; and such are evil-doers and ought to bear their own Burthen.

But we hope if such should be found that hath the name Quaker committing evil things, no just men will judge it equal, that we as a People should be charged guilty thereof; in so doing no Society of men can be innocent.

We do declare we know no Printer amongst us guilty of meddling with the said Declaration, neither can we be privy to any such thing, nor have we any Correspondency or Confederacy with any such Persons, or matter in any thing that tends to the disturbance of the Peace of the Kingdom; neither do we trouble the King and Government otherwise then by Application in humility, laying before them our great sufferings. Endeavouring to persuade them by Counsel, Testimony, Exhortation, and Conversation, that we are peaceable and free from the very inclination of raising Storms, or Commotions, in the Nation, Country, or Kingdom, where we dwell.

We have not Suffered as busy bodys or meddlors with other mens Matters, or as stirrers up of Rebellion, or as having any hand therein; and we hope it will be manifested to all that we are free from such things. And that the unkind Observator will fail in his endeavor to cause the innocent to suffer with the guilty.

Our constant Practice hath been to obey Magistracy, and to shew forth obedience to every ordinance of men ( that tends to the praise of them that do well, and to the terror of those that do evil ) for the Lord's-sake, for the Truths-sake, even in all things Relating to the things of a man; not for fear of punishment, but for Conscience-sake: we believe it our duty and ornamental to our Profession. Being bound by the law of God written in our hearts thereto, and all that are and have been faithful to the same, are and have been found therein, and in the constant practice thereof; and no cause hath been found against us but in things relating to God, about Forms, Fashions,

and Ceremonies of Religion, Church, and Worship, and here in we there with the Righteous, with the truly Consciencious in all Ages; whose choice was alwayes rather to obey God then Men, suffer for well doing rather then wrong, violate or destroy and make ship wrack of Faith and a good Conscience; as might be demonstrated at large.

Now as we have alwayes bore witness against Cruelty, Violence, and Persecution, purely about Religion, or the form and manner of Worship, and the destroying mens Libertys, Lives, and Estates in this World; about the understanding or misunderstanding of the things of the World to come. We say, as we have asserted these things to be inconsistent with true Religion, and Christianity, and Contrary to the nature thereof; so alwayes we have and do affirm and declare, that where mens Opinions and Principles about Religion, leads them to Covenant, Conspire, Plot, and Contrive Mischief, and Rebellion, under what name or pretence soever; and if they are but found making any steps thereto, though they do not effect the same, they are evil doers. Such being indeed a scandal and Reproach to true Christianity, which never taught nor led any to consult the hurt, or to rise up with violence against King, Prince, Ruler, or Governour of the Kingdom, Countrey, Province, or City where they dwell. Though such Kings, Princes, Rulers, or Governours, where Heathens, or Infidels, hereby the Primitive Christians were taught and enabled to suffer, but not to Rebel: and true Christianity is now the same, and teaches the same lessons to the true professors thereof.

For the true Christian sufferers knows right well, that it is the prevailing of the Spirit of Darknes, Ignorance, and Enmity, in the hearts of their Enemies and Persecutors; that causeth them to Hate Reville and Persecute them as it did their Captain Christ Jesus; so cannot hate, but pray for and pittv them as Creatures Captivated and blinded with the Spirit of Error and Ignorance, as the poor Jews were, who slew Christ and Persecuted his Followers, and all for want of knowing of them: as it is writter. *If they had known him, they would not have Crucified him; Father forgive them they know not what they do. &c.*

So if those who persecute Christ in his Members now, did but know him and them: and their innocent design and business in the world; which is to bear witness to the truth and the Spirit of it, which hath made them free from the Spirit of this world, which

which lusteth to Envy, Hatred, Violence, and evil Will. They would not endeavour to spoile and ruin them for their love and good will, in telling them what the Lord hath done for their Souls, and how they may Come to enjoy the same.

We have no bale Selfish interest nor design to carry on, we cannot be privy to, nor active in any hurtful design, or Conspiracy against any of our Neighbours, nor any man: much less against the King, or the Peace of our Country, we are not troublesome to the Magistrates, neither do men find cause against us save in matter of our God.

Our endeavour hath been ( ever since God opened our understandings, and seperated us from the divers sorts of Worshipps and Worshipers that are and have been in these Nations ) to walk Circumspectly not as Fools, though accounted so, not as Seditious Sectaries though reckoned amongst them, not as disturbers of the peace, though we have been dealt with as such. Indeed we have had great cause to know and be assured of something that is better then House or Land, Goods and Liberty; that are Made willing to expose them all to loss and ruin, rather then sin against our knowledge that God hath given us; rather then break Christs Commands and precepts: rather then disobey his Doctrine which he his Ministers, Disciples, and Followers not only taught but practised in ages past, and he doth and will enable his followers in this age to do the same, cloathing them with zeal for his name; and with love, meekness, and Gentleness towards all which in time may quench the wrath and Rage of men, and provoke them to love and good works; and also make them confess and acknowledge that God is with us of a Truth. The which till the Lord bring it to pass, we are willing in peace and patience to wait, and quietly to bear the wrath and rage of men against us.

For we firmly believe and assuredly know that where ever men are found Seditious disturbers of the Peace, or in the practice of violence and cruelty, under the Notion and Profession of the Christian Religion; such are certainly deceived and bound under the Chain of a false Opinion, and they have not the love of God nor their Neighbour planted in their hearts, and are far estranged from that Royal law of Christ Jesus, as *ye would that men should do to you, do so to them likewise*; in whomsoever this love to God and their Neighbour is wanting, and the breach of this law is found, they are of some private Opinion,  
and



and are prone to use violence and endeavour to impose their opinions by force upon others, when they have power and opportunity in their hands; from hence hath risen much Trouble, Wars, and Bloodshed in this and many Nations, which we desire God to prevent for the future.

For we do affirm all such things are contrary to the nature of Christ and Christianity, his Doctrine and Example teacheth no such things, the tenor of his Gospel is *Peace on Earth, and good will towards men; love not only your Friends but your Enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, do good to all, follow peace with all Men.*

In this the Christian Religion excels all the Religions in the World; the love of God is the foundation and topstone of this Religion, and the true Christians hath it shed abroad in their hearts, and where this is wanting in the hearts of men professing and talking of Religion, though they may have a zeal for the formality thereof, yet they have not Acceptance with God therein.

Those sayings of Christ, *With what Judgement you Judge, you shall be Judged; with what measure you Meet, shall be measured to you again,* hath been and shall be witnessed a great truth; Infallible and Universal.

Therefore it concerns all especially those that profess God, Christ, and the Scriptures, to take heed what Judgment they give, and what measure they meet, God will not be mocked, he is just and righteous in all his wayes, and doings; such as men sow they shall reap Sooner, or Later. Vengeance is the Lords and he will repay it, and he knows how to succor and support those that truly fear him, and works Righteousness in all Nations; and those are sincere in heart to God and true to what they know of him, though it be but a little and under many clouds and weakneses, they are and shall be accepted by him, through the Son of his love: under whose hand and power we have resigned up our selves and our innocent cause, assuredly knowing that he will plead it in the hearts of our Enemies, and make them in some measure sensible thereof, and that as we abide in his fear which is the beginning of all true wisdom; and in the participation of his love, we shall be a blessing to our Nation, and the Children unborn shall call us happy; when they shall hear of our love and faithfulness to God, the King and our Country, and of our patient Suffering for well doing, then shall they praise God on our behalf, and say of a truth, God was with us and did uphold us by the arm of his Power. So

So with hearty prayer to Almighty God, that the King and those in Authority may see and behold our Innocency and Love towards Him and all Men; and our tenderness of Conscience and fear towards God, and incline their hearts to deal with us accordingly. However we pray for the King, and the prosperity of our Country, heartily desiring that Peace, Love, good Will, and good Neighbourhood may abound therein, and ~~that all~~ Divisions, Heats, Animosities and evil designs one against another may be extinguished and come to an end amongst all our Neighbours, and Country men, the which we earnestly desire and Remain friends of God and all men.

*From and in behalf of the People of God called Quakers.*

London dated the  
27th 5th month 85.

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*The End.*

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